

AGR pen

February | Februarie 2018

Comment by industry on the State of the Nation Address (SONA) by newly elected President Cyril Ramaphosa

Agbiz

Agbiz strongly welcomed the State of the Nation Address by newly elected President Cyril Ramaphosa and welcomed the general thrust of his SONA's focus on revitalising the economy and the commitment to root out corruption.

"The new approach in the 2018 SONA of instilling a changed vision of hope, unity, service and prosperity is necessary to turn South Africa around to achieve Nelson Mandela's dedication to a fair, just and decent society," Dr John Purchase, CEO of Agbiz said.

He added that the indicated policy of expropriation without compensation of property to effect radical land reform, however, remained an issue of major concern

to Agbiz. To address growing uncertainty and disillusionment in the land reform space, government needs to engage Business on the issue of property rights as a matter of urgency. All the good intentions in the SONA will be in vain if property rights are not dealt with within the ambit and context of the current Constitution of South Africa," he said.

A further interesting call by President Ramaphosa was for financial institutions to partner with government in mobilising resources to accelerate the land redistribution programme as increased investment is required in the sector. Agbiz, together with the Banking Association South Africa (BASA,) developed such a commercial model for accelerated land reform more than two years ago. Despite repeated efforts by Agbiz and BASA to implement this co-financing model, adopted



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in principle by the Minister and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), nothing came of the private sector initiative.

Agbiz also welcomed the focus on ensuring greater coherence and consistency in the implementation of economic policy and the envisaged establishment of a Presidential Economic Advisory Council comprising appointments from business, labour, civil society and academia. Dr Purchase suggested that the President should also consider the establishment of a Presidential Working Group for Agriculture, as functioned successfully under the auspices of President

Thabo Mbeki during his terms as President of South Africa.

ASUF

“As the representatives of the entirety of organised agriculture, we are of the hope that your presidency will mark a turnaround of the setbacks we have experienced over the past nine years”, said Japie Grobler, chairperson of ASUF.

“We believe that your leadership will mean the strengthening of our democracy, deepening of social cohesion and the advancement of the interests of all the people of South Africa”, Grobler added. ■

EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH, ATTRACTING INVESTMENTS AND JOB CREATION HITS THE RIGHT NOTES, BUT...

The State of the Nation Address by President Cyril Ramaphosa was a frank admission of the challenges negatively impacting on the morale of South Africans and the drivers which are critical to take our nation forward.

“Agri SA therefore wholeheartedly supports the economic solutions outlined in the State of the Nation Address to turn the country around and to create a future of hope, social cohesion and prosperity for all” Dan Kriek, President of Agri SA stated.

Significant emphasis was placed on the need to create jobs, advancing transformation and establishing an ethical, caring and service orientated state fraternity at municipal level, provincial and national level. Agri SA also welcomes the announcement to clamp down on corruption in state departments as well as the private sector.

We enthusiastically applaud the practical steps outlined to ensure policy certainty, reduce government departments, grow the local economy, attract investments, boost the manufacturing sector and grow the small business environment, Kriek added.

The establishment of local economic zones, the review of SARS and state-owned enterprises, appointment of the right people as well as implementing a wide range of social and economic interventions in the small business sector, agriculture, mining, tourism and other sectors are also welcomed. Agri SA pledges its co-operation to ensure the achievement of all the outcomes related to these plans.

Prioritising the economy and the role of entrepreneurs was also a key feature of the address. Agri SA therefore calls on



the President to seize the opportunity and exploit the goodwill on offer from local and international investors. The emphasis on promoting partnerships between business, labour, government and the public is to be welcomed as well as the plans outlined to develop our young people.

However, such a bold vision cannot be tarnished by excluding anyone or a particular community. The plans announced by the President should be inclusive of all the people of South Africa regardless of race, colour, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age or physical constraints.

The National Constitution demands of all of us to build a united and non-racial society and to nurture the talent and honour the contribution of all our people. South Africa remains a highly divided nation and it is through honouring the dignity of every South African, inclusivity and mutual respect that this divide can be bridged.

However, Agri SA is highly concerned with the contradictory statements related to acknowledging agriculture as the biggest contributor the past quarters in terms of economic growth and job creation, whilst in the same breath calling for the expropriation of land without compensation. Not only does it subvert the letter and spirit of Section 25 of our National Constitution, but it also

entrenches the perception that the governing party has no regard for the founding principles of our newly founded democracy.

The question also remains: From whom will land be expropriated and to whom will it be given? Such populist statements will do more harm than good and contradicts the underlying theme of the State of the Nation Address to grow the sector through investment to unleash its fullest potential.

Agri SA therefore appeals to the President to rather desist from such populist rhetoric and to engage with the commercial agricultural industry to find amicable solutions to the land question.

Agri SA is developing its own land transformation plan that will be commercially driven and will aim to increase national production significantly without having to change the constitution – Omri van Zyl (Executive Director) added.

“Undermining the notion of private ownership and still expecting the private sector to enthusiastically embrace partnerships between themselves and the state will not happen” van Zyl added.

It is through win-win partnerships and policy certainty that the vision of a safe, productive and content South African society can be realised. ■

The new executive committee of the Western Cape Branch of the Agricultural Writers SA are:

Eunice Joubert - Chairman
Hugo Lochner
Glennis Kriel
Adele Engelbrecht
Jeandre du Preez



Agripen Monsanto erken personeel se prestasies tydens jaarlikse Toekenningsgeleentheid

NUUS-
brokkies

Tydens 'n glansgeleentheid Saterdagand, 3 Februarie 2018, het Monsanto Suid-Afrika erkenning gegee aan personeel wat in 2017 die ekstra tree gegee het in die uitvoering van die maatskappy se strategie en in die behaling van besigheidsdoelwitte.

Van die erkennings het gegaan aan:



"Ons salueer graag hierdie individue, maar erken ook elke persoon in die maatskappy se bydrae tot Monsanto se sukses," sê Kobus Steenekamp, Besigheids en Kommersiële Bestuurder Monsanto SA.

- 2017 Saadverkoopsbestuurder van die Jaar - Johan Bibbey - Streek 4 (Vrystaat)



Van links: Merab Olong, Menslike Hulpbronbestuurder Afrika, Johan Bibbey, Streekbestuurder Streek 4, Gyanendra Shukla, Monsanto Afrika Bestuurder en Kobus Steenekamp, Besigheids- en Kommersiële Bestuurder Monsanto SA

- 2017 Gewasbeskerming-verkoopsbestuurder van die Jaar - Thom Steyn



Van links: Gyanendra Shukla, Monsanto Afrika Bestuurder, Thom Steyn, en Kobus Steenekamp, Besigheids en Kommersiële Bestuurder Monsanto SA.



**- 2017 Streek van die Jaar -
Streek 4**



Van links: Jan Lubbe (Heilbron) Refense, Gert Erasmus (Viljoenskroon), Leon Pretorius (Vereeniging/Potchefstroom)

**2017 Saadverteenwoordiger
van die Jaar -
Jaco du Toit, Streek 4**



Van links: Johan Bibbey, Streekbestuurder Streek 4, Jaco du Toit, Verteenwoordiger Bothaville-suid, en Gyanendra Shukla, Monsanto Afrika Bestuurder

**2017 Saadmakelaar
van die Jaar -
Nelius Möll, Streek 1**



Van links, Ockie van Schalkwyk, Streekbestuurder Streek 1, Nelius Möll, Amersfoort, en Gyanendra Shukla, Monsanto Afrika Bestuurder

**2017 Landboukundige
van die Jaar - Anton Swanepoel,
Noord-Kaap**

Andrew Bennett, Asië-Afrika Tegnologiebestuurder, Anton Swanepoel, Leonard Oberholzer, Suid-Afrika Tegnologiebestuurder Yamiela Chem - Johan Smit, kon ongelukkig nie die geleentheid bywoon nie, maar hy het die toekening ontvang vir die verkoops persoon wat die grootste bydra gelewer het ten opsigte van die ontwikkeling van nuwe toetreders en kleinboere.



MEDIA STATEMENT

Tobacco farming under threat from illicit trade



Vaalwater, 31 January, 2018 – Tobacco farming in South Africa is being threatened by the proliferation of illicit trade in tobacco products, having lost 2 million tonnes in production since 2012, while input costs have been rising. Speaking at an annual Farmers Day in Limpopo today, Limpopo Tobacco Processors (LTP) Rudolf Otterman, Chairman of LTP said total tobacco production in 2012 stood at 13.5 million tonnes, while just 11.3 million tonnes was produced in 2016.

“We’ve emerged from the devastating drought of 2015 and yields are improving, but we face an even greater threat in the form of the illicit trade, which robs the legal industry of income and puts all the jobs and livelihoods in the tobacco value chain at risk,” said Van Staden British American Tobacco South Africa estimates that 47% of the tobacco market is controlled by illicit players, making it one of the largest in the world and costing the fiscus up to R9 billion a year in uncollected taxes as production volumes are concealed from the authorities and escape taxation.

This makes these illegal products far cheaper than legal cigarettes, which pay a minimum tax of R16.30 per packet of 20 that the illicit products don’t pay – meaning legal producers not only lose out to unlicensed competitors, but have to compete for market share with these unfairly priced products.

The consequences are potentially devastating. The more volumes of legal tobacco decline, the more it costs per kilogramme to produce – threatening the sustainability of the sector. Unit costs of tobacco have already gone from R4.12/kg to R4.92/kg (19.4%) between 2012 and 2016.

This has severe implications for the economy and employment in a struggling agricultural sector that is vital to vulnerable communities in neglected rural areas such as Limpopo – the biggest tobacco-growing area in the country. “Farmers face enormous commercial challenges due to illicit trade and as a result we are forced to purchase less leaf from them, resulting in job losses in the whole tobacco value chain,” said BAT’s Head of External Affairs, Joe Heshu.

“It is not just the annual turnover in processed tobacco of more than R600 million a year that is under threat, it is the job security of everyone in the value chain, from farm workers and commercial farmers, small-scale farmers in our highly successful Emerging Farmers Initiative, people employed by tobacco processors and at our production facility in Heidelberg and distribution and retail staff, not to mention the indirect jobs that this industry supports,” said Heshu.

An economic impact assessment conducted by respected research house Quantec showed the economy-wide impact of BAT alone contributed more than R18 billion to South Africa’s GDP in 2015, while its operations generated more than R14 billion in tax revenue and supported more than 72 000 jobs.

“If government continues to do nothing we will soon find ourselves in great difficulty to continue farming and manufacturing in South Africa,” Heshu said. ■

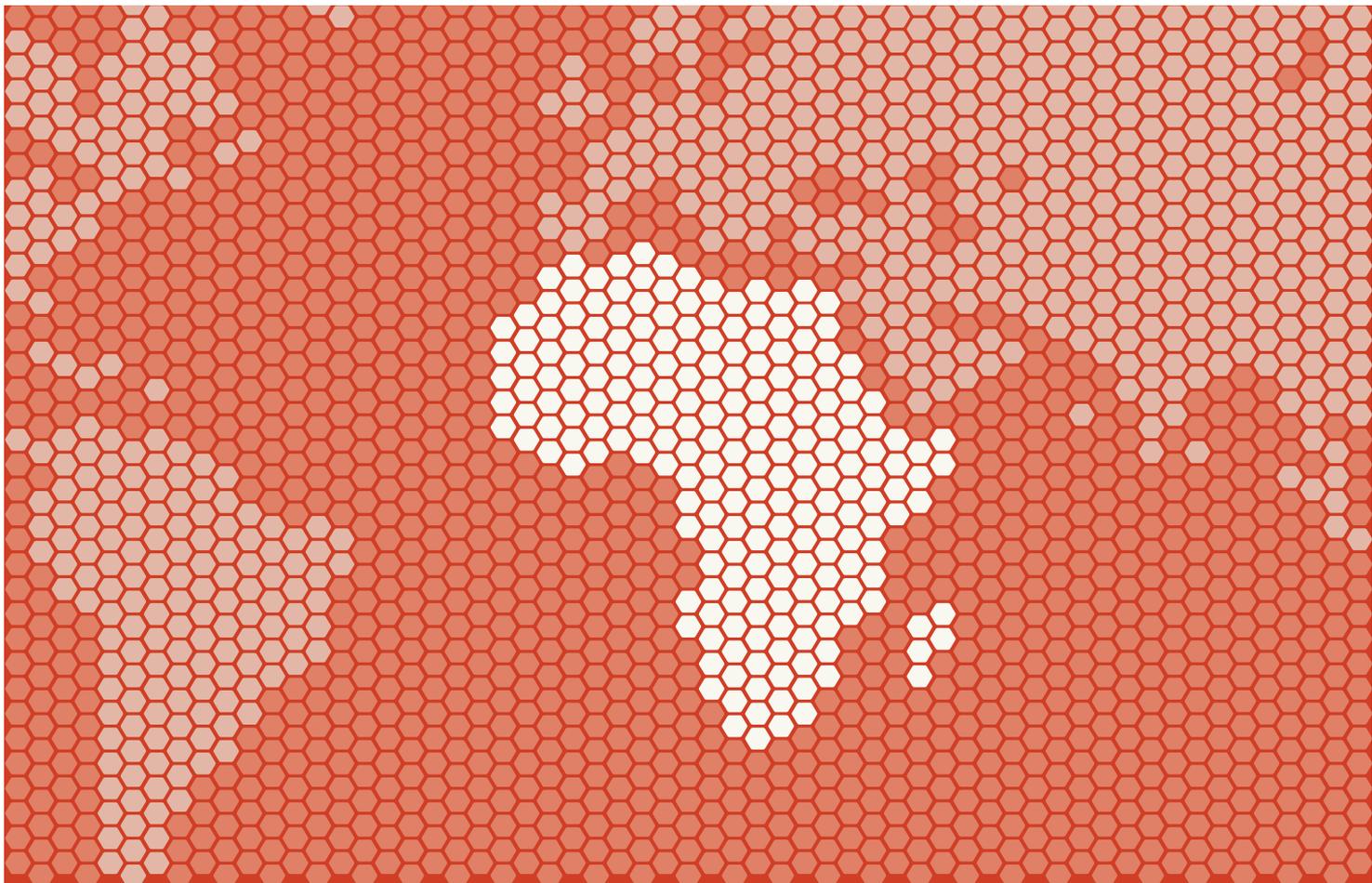
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Important DATES

07 & 08	March	Undercover Farming Expo & Conference 2018 07 - 08 March 2018, CSIR Convention Centre, Brumeria, Pretoria www.undercoverfarmingexpo.co.za		
19 & 20	March	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Landbouweekblad conference in Reitz 19 and 20 March 2018 in conjunction with Grain SA, the Riemland study groep from Reitz, and Monsanto as one of the sponsors.</td> <td>Landbouweekblad se konferensie 19 en 20 Maart 2018 op Reitz plaas, en op 22 Maart 2017 by Morgensrust in die Joostenbergvlakte.</td> </tr> </table>	Landbouweekblad conference in Reitz 19 and 20 March 2018 in conjunction with Grain SA, the Riemland study groep from Reitz, and Monsanto as one of the sponsors.	Landbouweekblad se konferensie 19 en 20 Maart 2018 op Reitz plaas, en op 22 Maart 2017 by Morgensrust in die Joostenbergvlakte.
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7 & 8	Jun	Agbiz Congress 7-8 June 2018		
9 to 11	May	Sansor Congress 9-11 May 2018 in Pretoria		
15 to 18	May	Nampo 15 to 18 May 2018 at Nampo Park		
<p>Three Sheep Courses in 2018</p> <p>The Veeplaas Intensive Sheep productions course, a partnership between Plaas Media (Veeplaas and Stockfarm), Mamre Dormers and the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of the Free State will present three courses during 2018.</p> <p>During the course the focus will be on the four factor plan and will include facilities, health, nutrition and financial aspects.</p> <p>For more information please visit www.agriorbit.com</p>				
10 to 12	April	10-12 April Bloemfontein		
31 to 01	June	31-01 June Royal Show, Pietermaritzburgh, Kwa-Zulu Natal		
18 to 19	July	18-19 July Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape		
18 to 20	Sept	ALFA 2018 18 tot 20 September 2018 Afridome, Parys www.alfaexpo.com		





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SAVE THE DATE
18 & 19 July 2018

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